ADJOURNMENT MOTION.

President: I have received notice of a motion to adjourn the business of the House to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance *viz.*, the serious situation created by the publication in the 'Madras Mail' dated the 8th August 1939, of a report by its Quilon correspondent stating that the State Congress Working Committee is discussing a scheme of political reform alleged to have been suggested by the Dewan to the State Congress Delegation which met him.

Does the honourable member want to add anything more ? Evidently there is a misconception.

Mr. Kottur K. Kunjukrishna Pillai (*Quilon cum Kunnathur*) : Sir, it is published in the Madras Mail dated the 8th August 1939 that a tentative scheme of constitutional reforms for Travancore as suggested by the Dewan to the State Congress deputation which waited on him was placed by Mr. Pattom Thanu Pillai before a meeting of the Travancore State Congress committee held at Kayankulam. And now I hear that discussions were held at the meeting about the alleged scheme. I have been receiving letters from various parts of the country from people belonging to various sections wanting to know whether it is a fact that any scheme was suggested by the Dewan for the acceptance of the State Congress and whether the discussions that were held at the State Congress meeting were based on suggestions made by the Dewan. The publications lead to the inference that there is a scheme. There is a rumour afloat that you are proceeding to Hyderabad and that has also been attributed as a signal for some constitutional reforms. These rumours are being ridiculously spread. To bring these facts to the notice of the Government I have sought permission for this adjournment motion.

President: Evidently considerable misconceptions have arisen in regard to this matter. In one sense, it is true that this honourable House is not in a position to discuss any scheme of constitutional reform in so far as it involves subjects which are taken away from the scope of discussion, by our rules and statutes. Nevertheless, I can imagine the anxiety of the honourable members of this House and of the other House of the Legislature to be kept aware of any scheme of this kind mentioned in the newspapers.

First of all let me say that my proceeding to Hyderabad has nothing to do with any constitutional reforms question. It is true that I am proceeding there in a couple of days, but only in order to be present by invitation at the Birthday Celebrations of H. E. H the Nizam. No other reason underlies the visit.

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So far as the conversations are concerned it is true that I have met some prominent members of the State Congress ; I have also met some members of the Travancore National Congress ; I have met some members of the S. N. D. P. Yogam too ; and some members of the S. N. D. S Yogam as also several Muslims purporting to speak on behalf of their community. I have met several members of the backward communities ; and they have put forward their points of view. It is fully realised by Government that any change or modification of the system of Government obtaining at the present moment can only be undertaken, formulated, discussed and implemented only after the fullest possible consultation and discussion with everybody interested in the matter, and representing the chief organisations and units in the State. In the discussions with the State Congress, as in the discussions with the other bodies it was made clear that the Travancore Government does not contemplate the inauguration of a system of responsible government in the sense in which the executive is responsible to the Legislature and its tenure dependent on the vote of the Legislature that is, in the British Parliamentary sense. Alternatives may be and were discussed on this basis, namely, that responsible government is not the anticipated programme. These points and alternatives have been discussed with the State Congress, with the National Congress, and others. Now, it was understood that these conversations were purely of a preliminary, explorative and provisional character, and there was no attempt to put forward a cut and dried scheme. But the gentlemen of the Press are, rightly from their own point of view, very enterprising. What has appeared in the newspaper as a formulated scheme, if it is meant by that a cut and dried scheme, to be accepted, or rejected, does not chronicle a fact. Certain tentative ideas were put forward informally and discussed and that is all.

Mr. Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai : Sir, I am perfectly satisfied with your assurance that no scheme has been put forward for acceptance or rejection in the course of your conversations with the State Congress delegation and nothing other than mere preliminary consultations of an exploratory nature were carried on with the State Congress as with the National Congress and other bodies and individuals. I am also greateful for the assurance that nothing will be done by Government without full consultations with all interests and all who are interested in such things.

Therefore I beg leave to withdraw the motion.

The motion was not pressed.

Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi : Sir, on a point of information. In view of the fact that the leaders of the State Congress have placed the matter confidentially before the working

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[Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi.]

committee, fully respecting the wishes of the Government and fully expecting the same honourable behaviour from them, is it fair on the part of Government to inform the House the nature of the conversations which the Dewan had with the leaders of that political organisation ?

President: The State Congress members have rightly pointed out to me that while they were willing to observe the convention *viz*, that the matter should be regarded as confidential and not let into the press, they themselves have felt the difficulty of keeping it secret. The press is entitled to exert its influence in such matters and a little exaggeration may therefore be expected and certainly excused.

DENAND FOR GRANTS—(*contd.*)

DEMAND XI—PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT—(*contd.*)

President: Order, order. The honourable members are no doubt aware that the time for discussion on the Public Works Demand is two hours and about an hour and ten minutes have elapsed and I found last evening that there was nobody to speak on this matter. And now I call upon Mr. Sesha Aiyar to speak. But if any honourable member desires to speak I don't want to stop him.

Mr. M. K. Ananthasiva Aiyar: Sir, I wish to bring only one proposition for the consideration of the Public Works Department. Now, the way in which contracts for works are being given is by calling tenders. I unerstand that these P. W. D. Officers have got a number of satellites under them to whom they give these contracts. The works that are executed by them are found to be too shabby, I do not know what delicacy is there for the P. W. D. Officers to check these works. A few days ago when I had been to the Cape I had the misfortune to go to the Fruit-farm there and see the new reservoir constructed for watering the plants in the farm. The sanction for the construction of this reservoir was got from Government after repeated recommendations by the Director and the Agricultural Board.

President: Is there any water in the reservoir ?

Mr. M. K. Anathasiva Aiyar: There is some water which has been collected from the channels. When I enquired of the Inspector there, about the tank, he told me that a sum of Rs. 7000 was spent for the purpose of constructing retaining walls around this tank. When I went there I found walls but fallen down and I fear that in a few months, the whole tank will be filled up with earth. Such things could very well be avoided if local people were given the option of taking the contract even after

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